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OCA FILE SSCI [REDACTED]

DATE: November 25, 1988

NOTE TO: Friends of Analysis

SUBJECT: HARVARD MEETING ON CONGRESS AND THE CIA

This note provides verbatim a memorandum from the Director of Congressional Affairs and its attached letter from the Staff Director of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. The memo and letter are intended to set the record straight regarding the proceedings of the 3 November faculty seminar at Harvard, on Congress and the CIA. Both writers see misrepresentations of the proceedings as reported by me in three FOA notes, dated 7, 8, 14 November. I of course regret the discomfort caused to others by my notes, as well as any inaccuracies or misrepresentations contained in them.

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OCA 88-3826  
22 November 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR:

[REDACTED]

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FROM: John L. Helgerson  
Director of Congressional Affairs

SUBJECT: Friends of Analysis Notes on Harvard Meeting

1. Thank you for sending me the notes you have circulated to the Friends of Analysis on the Harvard "faculty seminar." As you know, George Tenet feels you have misrepresented his remarks and this has created a bit of a problem. Whatever you may intend, it is obvious one cannot keep the fact and/or substance of these exchanges inside the Agency.

2. In passing on to the Friends of Analysis only selected items from the proceedings, I must agree with George that you have not reflected the overall thrust of his comments. He feels, and I agree, that his presentation overall was very supportive of the Agency, including its substantive work, its role in the Arms Control area, its need for increased funding to do its job, and the like.

3. George has forwarded to me a copy of a letter he wrote Larry Gershwin recounting what he said on the specific subject of the NIE on INF monitoring. I believe it would help set the record straight and reassure George Tenet and Larry Gershwin if you would circulate this memorandum and Tenet's letter to the

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Friends of Analysis.

4. From my own perspective, I must also add that I think you may have done Friends of Analysis a disservice by addressing a couple of the particulars of what was discussed at Harvard rather than leading with the larger context. As I saw the context, it was one in which Harvard and Tufts professors clearly had a dated and exaggerated view of the extent to which the CIA and the Congress are at odds. For example, several were clearly uninformed about the rules the President laid down in November 1987 with NSDD 286, and a number indicated to me their surprise that the relationship overall works well day in and day out. For me, the most revealing comment from George Tenet came when he turned to me and in a stage whisper said, "If these guys think they are going to see a prize fight, they will have to pay us a lot more than we are getting here today."

John L. Helgersen

Attachment

United States Senate  
Select Committee  
on Intelligence

November 21, 1988

Mr. Larry Gershwin  
National Intelligence Officer  
for Strategic Programs  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Larry:

Needless to say, I was very disturbed after our phone conversation on Friday, November 18. The possibility that anyone, either on your staff or within the intelligence community is under the impression that I characterized the NIE's produced at the time of the INF ratification debate as "useless", during my participation in a panel discussion at Harvard, requires that the record be quickly and clearly stated.

During my presentation, I read from a prepared text. The relevant portion of my text to the Special NIE produced in support of INF was as follows:

1. "The Committee often requests that finished intelligence be expanded upon, so that it has

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greater relevance to the Senate in its deliberations.

2. By example, during the INF ratification process, the National Intelligence Estimate, produced to assess the US ability to monitor the INF Treaty, constructed a number of interesting cheating scenarios the Soviets might undertake.

3. What the estimates did not assess was the likelihood or plausibility that the Soviets would undertake one of the scenarios based on:

- + Soviet operational requirements;

- + Targeting requirements both with and without a START agreement being in place;

- + The requirements of Soviet military doctrine for the use of nuclear weapons in the context of protracted conventional war in Europe;

- + Soviet security practices; and,

- + The costs of detection in the context of the overall foreign policy goals being pursued by the Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, guidance provided to the Intelligence Community for testimony, questions for the record and the additional analysis allowed the Senate to consider Soviet cheating within the proper analytical boundaries.

One could argue that this type analysis of Soviet cheating should have been incorporated into the original estimate. Indeed, the analysis which accompanies the description START cheating scenarios may do just that on the basis of our recent experience.

However, I would argue that the system worked to effectively address the concerns of policymakers. If policymakers pay attention to intelligence and frame questions properly and thoughtfully, will respond to bring competing disciplines and views to bear on a particular subject -- although admittedly at times, with great bureaucratic pain."

I believe I read these words almost verbatim.

Later, during the panel discussion I cited the example of your help in responding to our questions on Soviet

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cheating in an attempt to offset the impression created by another panelist, to the effect that all of the agency's political analysis is poor or useless to policymakers. Again, using the INF experience as an example, I attempted to portray the enthusiasm with which analysts will respond to policymakers if only they (policymakers) would take the time to read and think about the intelligence they are provided.

At every public opportunity since our INF experience, I have cited the superior performance by US intelligence as a principal factor in the successful ratification of the Treaty by the United States Senate. The work of your staff, ACIS and SOVA was critical to the Committee's own successful performance.

Indeed on a personal note, the Committee's performance on INF was in large measure responsible for my own elevation to my current position. That is why I was so saddened and disturbed to learn that my remarks at Harvard may have been so misconstrued. I have attempted to review the events surrounding the Harvard discussion in an attempt to recall whether there is any possibility that I made any thoughtless remarks which may have been interpreted in the manner you suggested in your phone call. I simply cannot recall any such statements. If the record shows otherwise, I would be the first to personally and publicly apologize to you and your staff.

As Staff Director of the Senate Select Committee, I believe it is essential to always set a positive, constructive tone in conducting what can at times be a difficult relationship with US intelligence. I have made a sincere effort in the regard to ensure that when we do have disagreements, they be resolved expeditiously and in the most professional manner. The type of remarks attributed to me at Harvard are not in character with the way I conduct myself. I believe those who know me will concur. It is to the many who do not know me that I direct this correspondence.

I hope you will share my thoughts on this matter with your staff.

Thanks,

George J. Tenet

cc:

Doug MacEachin  
John Helgersen

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